

understand that in a storm of this size, there is serious risk of significant flooding.

The message to the people of the Gulf Coast is, this storm is dangerous. There's a real possibility of flooding, storm surge, and high winds. And therefore, it is very important for you to follow the instructions and direction of State and local officials. Do not put yourself in harm's way or make rescue workers take unnecessary risks. And know that the American people stand with you and that we'll face this emergency together.

In the coming days, I encourage people across our Nation to help their neighbors in need. You can contribute to charities such as the Red Cross. You can volunteer your time to help those in need. And of course, you can pray for those who might be suffering.

In light of these events, I will not be going to Minnesota for the Republican National Convention. I'm going to travel down to Texas tomorrow to visit with the Emergency Operations Center in Austin, where coordination among Federal, State, and local government officials is occurring. I intend to go down to San Antonio, where State and local officials are prepositioning relief materials for Texas and Louisiana.

And I'll have a chance to visit with residents of both States who have been evacuated.

I will not be traveling to Louisiana tomorrow because I do not want my visit to impede in any way the response of our emergency personnel. I've been talking to the Governors yesterday and today; I also spoke with Mayor Nagin of New Orleans to make sure that they're getting everything they need from the Federal Government to prepare for what all anticipate will be a difficult situation. I hope to be able to go to Louisiana as soon as conditions permit.

This Nation has come to know the strong and resilient spirit of the people of the Gulf Coast. They've made it through great challenges in the past, and they're going to make it through this one as well. In the meantime, all those preparing for this storm are in our thoughts and our prayers, from me and Laura and our whole Nation.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:24 p.m. at the FEMA Operations Center. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Briefing at the Emergency Operations Center in Austin, Texas

September 1, 2008

Governor, thank you; Senator, thank you for coming; Members of Congress.

The coordination on this storm is a lot better than on—than during Katrina. A lot of it had to do with the Governors. Yesterday I was on the video conference with the Governors of Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas. There was clearly a spirit of sharing assets, of listening to somebody's problems and saying, how can we best address them? The Federal Gov-

ernment is very much involved in helping the States. Our job is to assist. That's why Secretary Paulison is with me today; he heads FEMA.

I do want to thank the State of Texas and other States for welcoming citizens from Louisiana. It's been a huge evacuation. It's hard for a citizen to pull up stakes and move out of their home and face the uncertainty that comes when you're not at home. And I want to thank

those citizens who listened carefully to the local authorities and evacuated. And I want to thank my fellow citizens in Texas and in other States for welcoming these folks in open arms. The State of Texas is a generous State. And, Governor, I wanted to thank you and your team for being so kind to the people.

And it's very important for those who have been evacuated to listen very carefully to the officials in their respective States before they decide to return. This storm is yet to pass. It's a serious event. And as the Governor mentioned, the people of east Texas got to be prepared for a possible flooding event.

All in all, what I look for is to determine whether or not assets are in place to help, whether or not there's coordination, and whether or not there's preparation for recovery. And to that end, I feel good about this event.

And I do want to thank Gail McGovern of the American Red Cross for joining us, and thank a lot of the other organizations that are preparing to go help people in need. These organizations, such as the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army, require the support of our citizens.

And if you're interested in how you can help once the storm passes, please call up the different web sites of these organizations and donate your time or your money so that the recovery effort is as compassionate and complete as possible.

Governor, thanks for having me. I want to thank your team for all the hard work they're doing. I'm looking forward to going in with you in the room next door to say thanks to the people that are working the long hours. And we're going to go down to San Antonio and see a staging area there and thank the people there for working so hard, not only on behalf of the citizens of Texas, but on behalf of the people of the region.

Appreciate it. It's good to be home.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:05 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. J. Richard Perry of Texas; Sen. Kathryn A. "Kay" Bailey Hutchison; Gov. Robert R. Riley of Alabama; Gov. Piyush "Bobby" Jindal of Louisiana; Gov. Haley R. Barbour of Mississippi; and Gail J. McGovern, president and chief executive officer, American Red Cross.

Remarks at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas *September 1, 2008*

The President. You know, one of the great things about our country is the number of people who volunteer during one of these incidents. Here are some Red Cross volunteers. They are—they symbolize the thousands that will help.

And my call to our fellow citizens is that—find out how you can help. You can help by volunteering. You can help by contributing to the Red Cross or the Salvation Army. Somebody is going to say, "Well, I don't know how to." Well, it's pretty easy. You can get on the web page. If you're

interested in the Red Cross, just call up Red Cross on your—and they'll steer you to the way to help.

Anyway, America is a great country. It's great because we've got great people. Nobody is happy about these storms; everybody is praying for everybody's safety. But I'm confident that after the storm passes and there's a human need, it will be met because of the generosity of the American people.

And I want to thank you all for setting such a good example.